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ABSTRACT

Through a literature review and an analysis of student files of the London (Ontario) Board of Education, researchers made several findings on the effects of school absence on students' academic achievement. The literature review first revealed four problems in interpreting research results, involving identification of the reasons for absence, measurement of the time absent, awareness of absence's complex effects, and consistency in attendance recordkeeping. The publications reviewed related absence to (1) student characteristics (sex, grade level, and attitude toward school); (2) family characteristics (socioeconomic status and parental attitudes); (3) school characteristics (academic quality and teacher attitudes); and (4) environmental variables (weather or day of the week). Files covering the entire elementary and secondary academic histories of 3,179 students who entered grade nine in 1965-66 were analyzed statistically. Student variables examined included sex, grade, mobility, intelligence, achievement, grade repetition, and non-London residence. Among the findings were that absence has a negative effect on achievement at the elementary as well as the secondary level; that the pattern of absence in elementary school affects absence in secondary school; and that the effect of absence varies with the student's intelligence. (RW)

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ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL: PATTERNS AND EFFECTS

R. G. Stennett, Ph.D. & L. M. Isaacs

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ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL: PATTERNS AND EFFECTS

R. G. Stennett, Ph.D. & Lorna Isaacs

Educational Research Services
London Board of Education

Stimulated by a recent finding (Stennett and Isaacs, 1979) that absence from school had a major impact on the achievement of students in their first year at Thames and Ross secondary schools, we undertook a critical review of the relevant research literature. In addition, some detailed statistical analyses were undertaken of a computer file which contained relatively complete information on the entire academic histories of the 3,179 students who entered grade 9 for the first time in 1965-66. This report summarizies the major findings from a review of the more experimental and theoretical literature and the analyses of our own computer file. A second report will summarize the literature which deals with attempts to improve school attendance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For convenience, the literature will be reviewed in terms of how absence from school relates to student characteristics, family characteristics, school factors and environmental factors. In addition, brief consideration will be given to some of the problems related to evaluating research in the area of school attendance.

Problems in Interpreting the Research Literature

There are at least four kinds of problems which need to be considered when approaching the literature on absence from school, viz., the kind or reason for absence, the unit(s) of measurement, complex effects of

absence and the attendance record-keeping process.

Reasons for absence from school. There are at least six different kinds of absence from school: (1) school phobia, a relatively rare clinical condition, (2) truancy, i.e., absence from school without the knowledge or consent of parents, (3) absence due to illness, which accounts for the great majority of all absence, (4) parent-condoned or 'attitudinal' absence, which may involve either the parents' passive acceptance of absence or parents' deliberate exploitation of children, (5) institutionally tolerated absence, which usually involves a passive acceptance of high levels of absence on the part of certain students when remedial efforts have failed or 'benign neglect' of the absence of troublesome students, and (6) parent-approved absence, such as removing a youngster from school to accompany parents on a holiday.

It should be understood that, in almost every research study, there is no differentiated treatment of these different kinds of absence. For practical purposes, relationships of absence from school to other factors are established by treating all absences as if they were the same.

Unit of measurement. Most research studies use measures of absence which represent the number or percent of days missed during a specified time interval, usually an academic term or year. Some studies use a measure which cumulates days missed over several academic years. Some investigators have used the number of incidents of absence, regardless of length, as a measuring unit, based on some evidence that this is a better measure of inappropriate or unwarranted absence. Still others have used measures which are corrected for when the absences occur, generally weighting absences occurring on Mondays and Fridays.

Because there are 'normal' variations in the number of days missed related to grade, sex, time of the year, days of the week, weather conditions, etc., considerable care needs to be given to the measure of absence used. One important improvement in measurement can be obtained by using grade-sex percentile norms (Stennett, 1967).

The fact that adequate 'measurement' of absence from school is a more complex matter than it might appear on the surface has produced some research reports of questionable value and some apparently conflicting findings. In addition, some investigators (e.g., Sharples, 1979) have even been misled, by using 'average daily attendance' figures, into concluding that '...school attendance at the elementary or primary level is not a problem' (p.4). Our own data indicate that that assumption is not correct.

Complex Effects

Complicating the interpretation of the impact of absence from school on academic performance is the presence of complex relationships between various measures of absence and various measures of achievement. For example, absence from school has differing effects on achievement as a function of the student's ability, prior achievement, sex and socioeconomic status. In addition, the effects of absence are cumulative and the measured effects may depend on when the absence takes place in relation to when the achievement measures are taken. It is also quite likely that absence from school may have more detrimental effects in some subject and program areas than in others and be more critical at certain grade levels.

Record-keeping

The nature of school attendance records has a major bearing on the

kind and quality of research done in the area of attendance. Differences among institutions and school systems in the consistency, accuracy and detail with which attendance records are kept are substantial. In many cases it is practically impossible to re-create a student's attendance history from school records. It is noteworthy that the best research studies have been conducted in school systems in which student attendance has been handled using computer-based reporting procedures. From the standpoint of both future research and remedial efforts, computerized reporting systems constitute a high priority need.

RELATIONSHIP OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL TO OTHER VARIABLES

Absence from school is related significantly to a great variety of other variables. For purposes of convenience, absence from school will be reviewed in terms of its relationships to four kinds of variables: student characteristics; the student's family characteristics; characteristics of schools, and 'environmental' variables.

Absence from School and Student Characteristics

Absence from school is related to a variety of student characteristics. The results of our current investigation, as well as those of Douglas & Ross (1965), Fogelman (1978), Levanto (1975) and Stennett (1967), indicate that there are substantial variations in absence from school related to a student's *sex* and *grade*. Girls tend to be absent more than boys at every grade and students in the primary and senior divisions miss more school than those in the junior and intermediate divisions.

The results of this study, as well as those of Douglas & Ross (1965), Fogelman (1978) and Stennett (1967), clearly indicate that a

student's absence in any one year is related to his *past attendance history*. In addition, there appears to be a subset of students (5 to 8% of all students) who show a pattern of *chronically poor attendance* of sufficient severity to involve their missing the equivalent of one full school year during their elementary years.

Several investigators have shown that students' absence from school is related to their academic achievement (Douglas, 1965; Fogelman, 1978; Gussett, 1967; Hambleton, 1967; Karweit, 1973; Levanto, 1975; Moos, 1978; Rozelle, 1968; Stennett, 1979 and Williams, 1976). These studies cover the entire academic spectrum from elementary to university levels and involve a variety of program types from academic to special vocational. The best of these studies show that the negative effects of absence from school are present (represented by correlations in the order of .4 to .6), even when the effects of intelligence and socioeconomic status on achievement have been taken into account.

As might be expected, students with poor attendance histories show a greater tendency to drop out of school than do regular attenders. For example, in the current study 48% of students with the best elementary attendance records who started a five-year program in grade 9 were successful in completing grade 13. The comparable figure for the worst attenders was 27.9%. This relationship between poor attendance and dropping out of school has also been found by Hambleton (1967), Kutcher (1972), Lloyd (1976), Sharples (1979), Stennett (1979) and Yudin, et al. (1973).

Students' *attitude toward school* is related to their attendance history. Students who are more positive in their attitude toward school and their teachers are more likely to be good attenders (Hambleton, 1967;

Karweit, 1973 and Moos, 1978).

Students whose *adjustment to school* is good tend to be better attenders (Fogelman, 1978; Hambleton, 1967; Tyerman, 1968 and Williams, 1976). Some investigators have concluded that chronically poor attenders have adjustment difficulties in family, community and peer relationships as well as at school. Given these facts it is not surprising that poor attenders show *little participation in the non-academic* aspects of school life (Karweit, 1973).

Absence from School and the Student's Family

There is little question that the characteristics of the family in which a student lives have a bearing on his pattern of attendance. In a very real way, and especially at the elementary level, inappropriate absence from school represents a failure in parenting.

It is clear that there are slight but significant relationships between the *socioeconomic (SES) level of a student's family* and his school attendance (Douglas & Ross, 1965; Fogelman, 1978; Galloway, 1976; Tyerman, 1968). Absence has a relatively minor effect on the achievement of upper SES students but a significant effect on the achievement of lower SES students. This differential effect tends to increase with the student's age.

Absence from school is more pronounced for students who live in *overcrowded conditions* (Fogelman, 1978) or *large families* (Douglas & Ross, 1965) and the effect is most evident in the attendance behaviour of the eldest child in the family.

Several studies agree in indicating that students from *one parent families* miss more school than those from intact families (Levanto, 1975;

Scott, 1978; Sharples, 1979 and Stennett, 1979). This effect is apparently more pronounced when the single parent is the mother. These findings suggest that inappropriate absence from school may reflect either weaker parental control in single-parent families and/or greater reliance on students for discharging family responsibilities normally assumed by the missing spouse.

Parents' attitudes toward *and interest* in the education of their children is related in the expected direction to their children's attendance records (Douglas & Ross, 1965; Scott, 1978 and Tyerman, 1968). In addition, the parent's perception of the school's attendance policy has a bearing on their child's attendance.

The children of parents who have *inadequate discipline* or who use corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique tend to have poorer school attendance histories than the children of parents who have good discipline.

Absence from School and School Characteristics

Although school characteristics have not been studied extensively in terms of their relationship to student absence, there is some evidence that the *type of school* (Tyerman, 1968) and its *academic quality* (Douglas & Ross, 1965) have a bearing on student attendance. Academically-oriented schools with high academic standards tend to have students who are better attenders than vocationally or technically oriented schools with indifferent standards.

School policies and expectations with respect to attendance influence student absenteeism (Kooker, 1976) as do *teacher expectations* (Lietz, 1976). *Teacher attitudes toward students* and *attitudes toward attendance* also influence student attendance (Moos, 1978; Karweit, 1973). Certain aspects

of the *classroom social environment* also influence absenteeism rates (Moos, 1978). Classes which students find enjoyable and in which there is good teacher control and clear rules tend to be better attended. Students also tend to respond to teacher's personal interest in them by attending more regularly.

Absence and Environmental Variables

The relationships established between absence from school and 'environmental' variables come largely from one extensive study by Karweit (1973) entitled 'Rainy days and Mondays'. As has been known for some time in industry, absence is greater on *Mondays and Fridays*. This is also true for students (Sharples, 1979). There is some indication that Monday absences are more often related to 'home problems' and Friday absences more to 'school problems.'

Absences from school are also more frequent on *rainy days* and for students who walk or take the bus to school than those who drive. Rainy days, Mondays and Fridays and mode of transportation may be additive in their effects.

Absence rates vary with the *time of the year*, tending to increase as the end of a semester or school year approaches.

The 'social environment' of students also may have some effect in the sense that school attendance can be influenced by peer models and/or peer pressure.

THE GRADE 9 CLASS OF 1965-66

Using a computer file, which contains fairly complete information on the entire elementary and secondary academic histories of the 3179 stu-

dents who entered grade 9 in a London secondary school for the first time in September of 1965, several detailed analyses of students' attendance and its relationship to their academic progress were undertaken.

Grade-Sex Norms

Figure 1 shows the average number of days missed per school year by grade and sex. The general trends evident in this Figure are very similar to those reported by Stennett (1967) for a large sample of students living in northern, rural Minnesota. The only major difference is for kindergarten. The London kindergarten data represent approximately a 50% 'underestimate' because, although students are on a half-day program, their absences are reported as the number of whole days absent.

It is clear from these data that: (1) children in both the primary and senior divisions miss more school than those in the junior and intermediate divisions, (2) girls as a group are consistently absent from school more than boys, (3) except for the primary division, students who are repeating a grade are more frequently absent and this trend is both more marked for girls and for students in the senior division.

Although no data are available it is probably safe to assume that the greater absence in the primary division is accounted for by infectious diseases of childhood whereas the greater absence in the senior division is related to a variety of factors related to student attitudes and motivation.

One of the major implications of these findings is that, when evaluating the pattern of students' absence from school, sex and grade must be taken into account. For example, whereas a boy absent about 13 days in

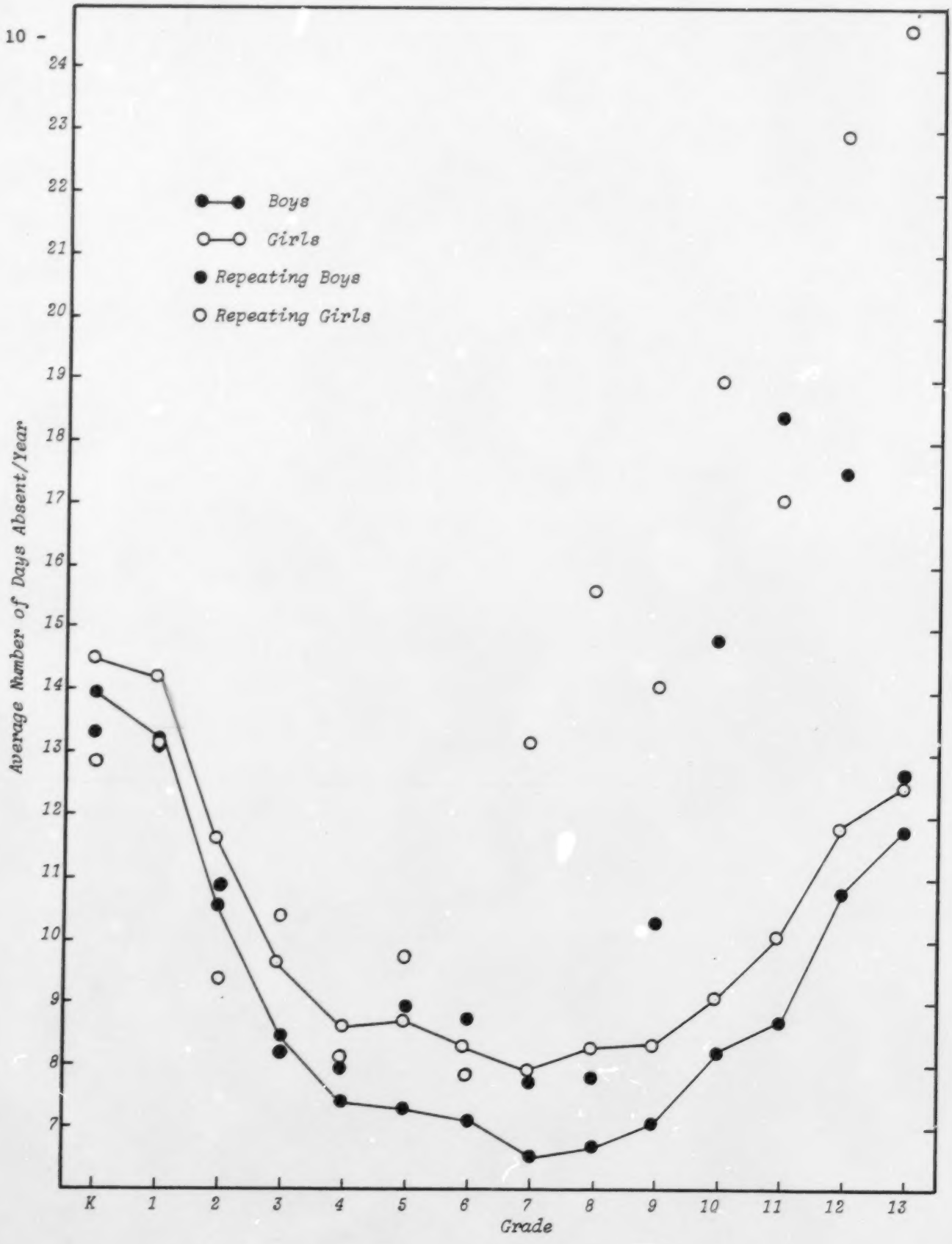

FIGURE 1 Mean Days Missed Per Year by Grade and Sex.

kindergarten is 'average', a boy absent 13 days in grade 7 is far 'above average' ....actually in the poorest 15% of all grade 7 boys. For this reason, tables of percentile norms by grade have been prepared, separately for boys (Appendix A) and girls (Appendix B). However, since the data on which these norms are based are over 15 years old, the tables should be used with some caution.

Average Number of Days Missed, K-8

Figure 2 gives percentage frequency distributions for boys and girls in terms of the average number of days of school they missed during their nine elementary years. The average is higher for girls ($\bar{X}$ = 9.88, S.D. = 6.63, N = 1725) than for boys ($\bar{X}$ = 8.65, S.D. = 5.77, N = 1901). The two curves, like those plotted for any single sex-grade group, show a marked positive skew.

The major implication of this finding is that a minority of students account for a disproportionate number of the total days missed. That is, there are a number of students who show a pattern of consistently poor attendance. For example, 3.3% of the boys and 5% of the girls missed, on average, more than 22 days in each of their elementary school years. This is the equivalent of missing one full school year over the nine elementary grades.

Chronically Poor Attenders

Another way of looking at this problem is to distribute students in terms of the number or percent of years in which their absence exceeded the 75th percentile. If one defines a chronically poor attender as a student whose absence is above the 75th percentile for more than 75% of

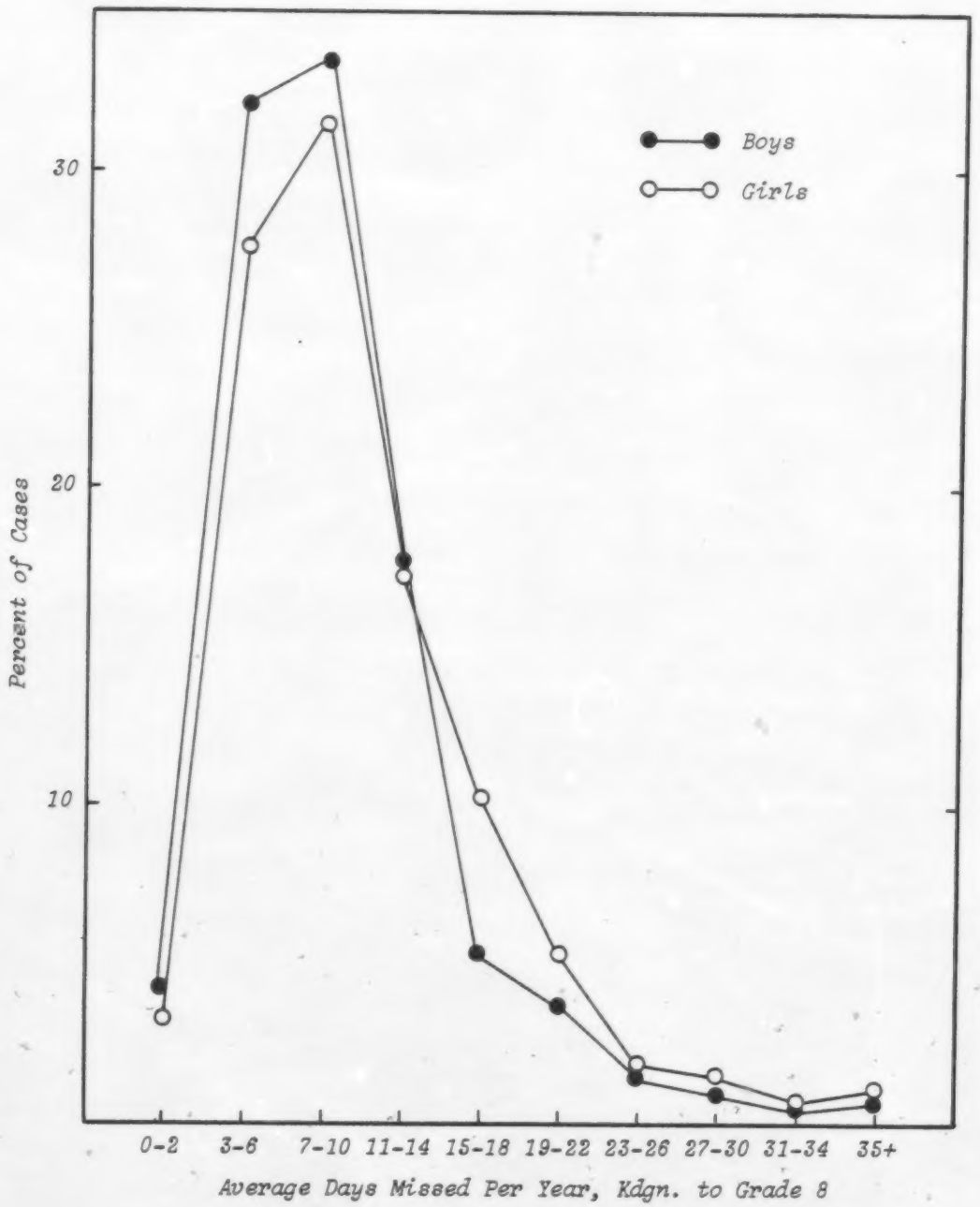

FIGURE 2 Percentage Frequency Distribution of Average Number of Days Missed Per Year, Kindergarten to Grade 8, by Sex.

his nine elementary school years, then 5.41% of the grade 9 65-66 cohort met this criterion. These students, on average, missed 207 days during their elementary school years. This means that approximately 1404 of the 25 950 elementary students currently enrolled will display this pattern of chronically poor attendance. Of these, about 728 will be boys and 676 girls.

Using a somewhat similar criterion, absence greater than the 75th percentile for 5 of 6 of the elementary years, grade 1 to grade 6, Stennett (1967) estimated the percentage of ch onically poor attenders at 7.75%. In Britain, Douglas and Ross (1965), using the criterion of absence greater than the 70th percentile for four consecutive elementary years, estimated the percentage of chronically poor attenders at 8.9%.

Although estimates of the number of chronically poor attenders obviously depends on the criterion used, it seems quite clear that a significant number of elementary students demonstrate this pattern. The next section of this paper examines some aspects of the impact of poor attendance on students' academic progress.

Attendance and Achievement - Elementary Level

A number of studies in Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada have shown that poor attendance has both short- and long-term negative effects on students' achievement. The findings of this study support this relationship.

Attendance and Grade Repetition/Acceleration

Students were divided into two groups in terms of the percentage of their elementary years in which their absence exceeded the 75th percentile.

In one group this percentage varied from 0-50 (good attenders); in the other group the percentage varied from 51 to 100 (poor attenders). Not only did 8% more of the poor attenders repeat one or more grades, but 7% fewer of them were accelerated.

Attendance and Teacher Marks

Although all students' marks tend to drop over the grade 3 to grade 8 years, the best attenders' marks fall by only 2-3 points whereas the worst attenders experience a 7-8 point drop. This differential occurs despite the fact, substantiated by the work of other researchers and our own, that there are only very slight relationships between student absence and measures of intelligence and socioeconomic status.

TABLE 1 Number and Percent of Students Who Attended More Than Four Elementary Schools, by Sex and Percent of Years During Which Their Attendance Exceeded the 75th Percentile.

% Years Absence > 75th Percentile	Boys			Girls		
	N*	N>4**	%	N	N>4	%
0 - 25	942	92	9.77	932	80	8.58
26 - 50	332	50	15.06	285	41	14.39
51 - 75	154	20	12.99	161	21	13.04
76 - 100	84	18	21.43	74	16	21.62

* N = Number of Cases
**N>4 = Number of students who attended more than 4 elementary schools.

Attendance and Student Mobility

Table 1 gives, separately for boys and girls and by the percent of elementary years in which their absence exceeded the 75th percentile, the numbers and percentages of students who attended more than four different elementary schools. It is quite clear from these data that poor attenders change schools much more frequently than good attenders. For example, the percentage of students who have attended more than four elementary schools is twice as high for the worst (21%) as opposed to the best (9%) attenders.

Attendance and Ability: Differential Effects

Although it is clear that absence from school has a negative effect on student achievement, it seems logical to assume that absence from school may be least detrimental to the most capable students and most detrimental to the least capable students. To assess the existence and size of this possible differential effect, the following analysis was conducted: (a) Students were divided into three groups in terms of the number of days absent in grade 7 (Low absence - an average of 2 days; Moderate absence - an average of 7.5 days, and High absence - an average of 20 days). (b) Each of these groups was, in turn, divided into three groups based on their mental age (MA)* as of September of their first grade 7 year (Low MA - average of 11-4; Moderate MA - average of 13-2, and High MA - average of 15-4). (c) The percentages of students failing grade 7 in each of the 9 cells were calculated and are plotted in Figure 3. The numbers of cases on which these percentages are based are given in Table 2. (d) Only students enrolled in the regular program in grade 7 were included in this analysis.

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*MA rather than IQ was used to eliminate the confounding effects of grade repetition and acceleration.

TABLE 2 Number and Percent of Students in Each Cell When Classified Into Three Absence and Mental Age Categories.

	Absence Group						
	Low ($\bar{X}$ = 2 Days)		Moderate ($\bar{X}$ = 7.5 Days)		High ($\bar{X}$ = 20 Days)		
Mental Age	N	%	N	%	N	%	Totals
Low ($\bar{X}$ = 11-4)	303	*10.7*	222	*7.8*	136	*4.8*	661
Moderate ($\bar{X}$ = 13-2)	940	*33.2*	560	*19.8*	249	*8.8*	1749
High ($\bar{X}$ = 15-4)	216	*7.7*	137	*4.8*	65	*2.3*	420
Totals	1461		919		450		2830

It seems quite clear from Figure 3 that the lower the students' intellectual ability the more detrimental effect absence from school has on his achievement. Thus, for the very capable students, even extreme absence has a relatively minor effect whereas, for the least capable students, even moderate absence produces a modest detrimental effect. It is noteworthy that fully one-quarter of the lowest-ability highest-absence group failed grade 7.

Attendance and Achievement - Secondary Level

Three major analyses of the relationships of absence from school to achievement were undertaken. Each of these analyses was conducted separately for grade 9 students entering 2, 4 and 5-year programs. Each analysis consisted essentially of comparing the academic success of students classified into four groups based on the percentage of their elementary years in which their absence exceeded the 75th percentile. The numbers and percents of

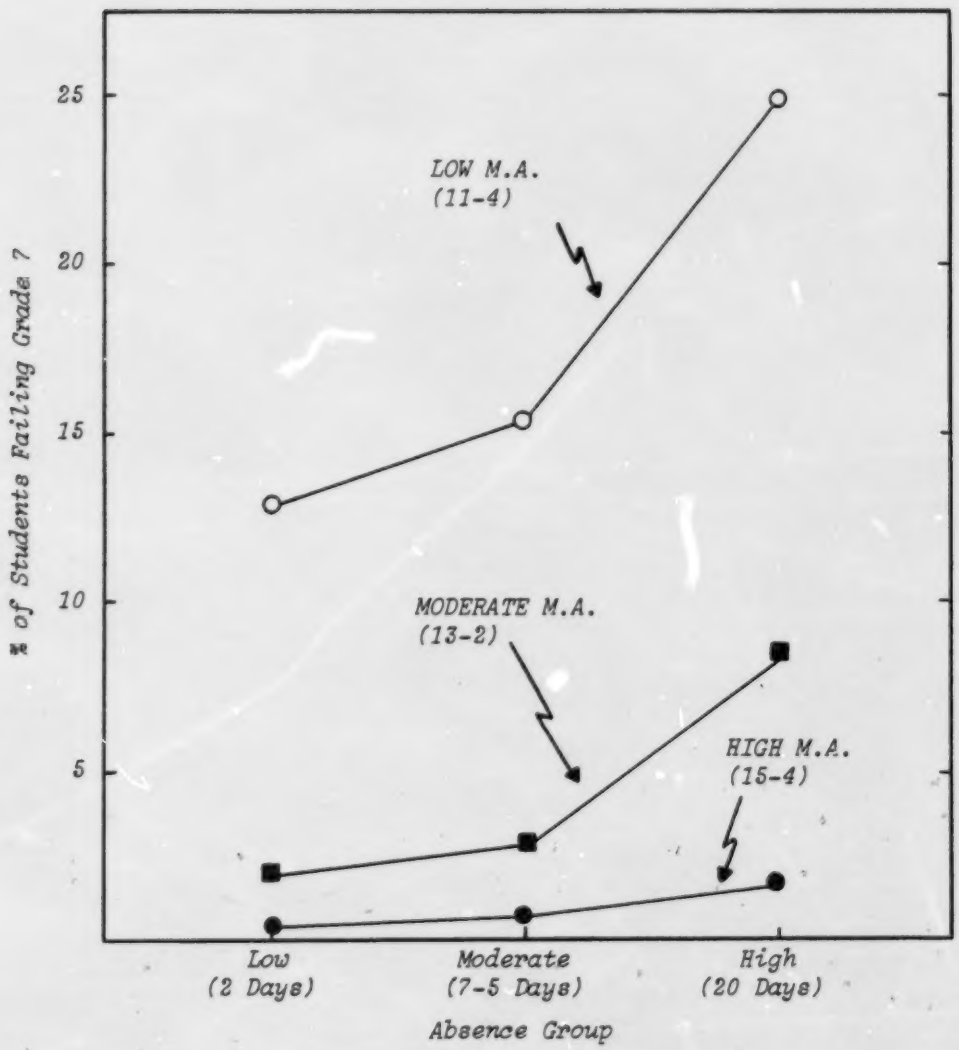

FIGURE 3 Percent of Students Failing Grade 7 by Absence and Mental Age.

students in each of these 'absence' groups, as well as their average D.T.L.C. grade 9 IQ scores, are given in Table 3. The reader should note that, because the number of cases in the extreme absence groups tends to be relatively small, estimates of academic effects for these groups tend to be less reliable. It should also be noted that the average IQs do not vary appreciably across absence groups within the three programs. This means that differences among the absence groups in academic achievement cannot be explained by ability differences.

Before examining absence effects on secondary school achievement, three other points of interest were examined: (a) the extent to which absence trends established at the elementary level continue into secondary school, (b) the extent to which students coming from non-London publicly-supported elementary schools differ from London students, and (c) the elementary grade repetition experience of students with varying elementary attendance histories.

TABLE 3 Numbers and Percents of Students in Each 'Absence' Group, With Grade 9 Mean IQ, by Grade 9 Program.

% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Grade 9 Program								
	2 Year			4 Year			5 Year		
	N	%	$\bar{X}$ IQ	N	%	$\bar{X}$ IQ	N	%	$\bar{X}$ IQ
0 - 25	231	71	83.3	491	71	98.6	1121	71	114.0
26 - 50	62	19	82.9	114	17	98.7	285	18	115.1
51 - 75	29	9	85.5	60	9	100.8	114	7	113.7
76 - 100	5	2	87.2	24	3	98.1	61	4	113.2
Totals	327			689			1581		

Elementary to Secondary Absence Trends

The figures in Table 4 indicate clearly that the pattern of attendance a student establishes at the elementary level tends to be continued at secondary school. It is also clear that there is a strong relationship between a student's elementary attendance history and his choice of secondary program. Students electing a 5-year program have the best attendance records at both elementary and secondary levels; 2-year program students have the worst records and 4-year program students fall in between.

TABLE 4 Mean Days Missed Per Secondary School Year, by Elementary Absence Group, for Students Entering Grade 9 in 2, 4 or 5-Year Programs.

Secondary Program	% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Grade				
		9	10	11	12	13
2-Year	0 - 25	8.7	11.6	(12.6)*		
	26 - 50	16.1	17.5	(22.3)		
	51 - 75	24.0	(21.8)			
	76 - 100	37.4				
4-Year	0 - 25	6.0	8.1	9.6	11.0	
	26 - 50	10.3	13.5	18.0	19.0	
	51 - 75	13.6	14.7	(13.9)	(18.7)	
	76 - 100	16.4	(17.8)			
5-Year	0 - 25	4.5	5.4	6.8	9.2	10.7
	26 - 50	8.3	8.8	11.0	13.2	14.9
	51 - 75	12.8	12.9	12.4	14.8	(17.6)
	76 - 100	16.7	18.2	20.2	20.9	(18.9)

*Figures in brackets in this and subsequent tables in this section are based on fewer than 20 cases.

Absence and 'Non-London' Students

Table 5 gives the percents of students, by absence group and secondary program, who were not enrolled in grade 8 in a publicly-supported London school. It is apparent from these data that relatively more poor attenders come from non-London schools.

TABLE 5 Percents of Students Who Did Not Attend in Grade 8 a Publicly-Supported London School, by Secondary Program and Elementary Absence Group.

% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Secondary Program			Totals
	2 Year	4 Year	5 Year	
0 - 25	28.1	20.4	16.7	19.2
26 - 50	30.6	16.7	18.7	19.8
51 - 75	37.9	23.3	21.1	24.1
76 - 100	(20.0)	16.7	31.1	26.7

Absence and Elementary Grade Repetition

Table 6 shows, by absence group and secondary program, the percents of students who repeated one or more elementary grades. These data indicate that, in general, students with poor attendance records at the elementary level are more likely to have repeated one or more elementary grades. The percent of students who have repeated one or more elementary grades also varies quite markedly, as expected, by secondary program.

Elementary Absence and Highest Grade Passed

Table 7 shows, separately by absence group and secondary program, the percents of students whose highest grade passed was either 9 or less or the grade which represented successful completion of the program in

which they enrolled in grade 9. It is quite clear from these data that: (a) the poorer a student's elementary attendance history the more likely he is to not get past grade 9 and (b) the poorer his elementary attendance the less likely he is to complete the program he elected to pursue in grade 9. These two trends are most apparent in the 2-year program and least apparent, though still substantial, in the 5-year program. This finding tends to confirm the earlier one that the effect of absence from school varies as a function of students' ability.

TABLE 6 Percents of Students, by Absence Group and Secondary Program, Who Repeated One or More Elementary Grades.

% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Secondary Program			Totals
	2 Year	4 Year	5 Year	
0 - 25	94.4	50.1	13.0	33.1
26 - 50	98.4	46.5	14.8	34.0
51 - 75	96.6	53.3	12.3	36.5
76 - 100	(100.0)	45.8	24.6	34.4

TABLE 7 Percents of Students, by Secondary Program, Absence Group and Highest Grade Passed.

% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Secondary Program					
	2 Year		4 Year		5 Year	
	9 or <9	10 or >10	9 or <9	12 or >12	9 or <9	13 or >13
0 - 25	36.9	63.0	17.0	61.0	7.5	48.0
26 - 50	45.2	54.8	20.3	40.7	12.0	44.7
51 - 75	65.5	34.4	20.0	46.7	10.7	35.4
76 - 100	(60.0)	(40.0)	43.4	39.1	18.0	27.9

Elementary Absence and Dropping Out

The percentages of students graduating or dropping out, by absence group and secondary program, are given in Table 8. It is clear from these data that the worse a student's attendance history, the more likely he is to drop out and the less likely he is to graduate. These trends are most evident for 2-year students and least evident for 5-year program students. Overall, poor attendance seems to produce about a 15% increase in the dropout rate and a 14% decrease in the graduation rate.

TABLE 8 Percents of Students Graduating or Dropping Out, by Absence Group and Secondary Program.

% Elementary Years Absence >75th Percentile	Secondary Program						Totals	
	2 Year		4 Year		5 Year			
	Grad	D.O.*	Grad	D.O.	Grad	D.O.	Grad	D.O.
0 - 25	57.9	38.4	62.1	33.4	71.1	28.0	66.9	30.8
26 - 50	49.2	49.2	43.0	52.3	71.3	25.9	60.8	36.1
51 - 75	32.1	67.9	51.8	48.2	62.2	34.7	54.4	44.0
76 - 100	(40.0)	(60.0)	45.5	45.5	57.4	42.6	52.7	44.6

*Grad = Graduating; D.O. = Dropping Out

SUMMARY

The theoretical literature dealing with absence from school was reviewed with respect to some of the problems involved in interpreting study findings, viz., reasons for absence, differing units of measurement, complex effects and record-keeping procedures. The research findings dealing with the relationship of absence from school to student, student's family, school characteristics and 'environmental' variables were summarized briefly.

Several detailed analyses were made of the data in a computer file which contained relatively complete academic histories of all of the students who enrolled in grade 9 in a London system secondary school for the first time in September, 1965. These analyses produced: grade-sex norms for absence; distribution of average number of days missed per year over the kindergarten to grade 8 years; estimates of the number of chronically poor attenders; estimates of the effects of absence from school on elementary grade repetition/acceleration rates, teacher marks and student mobility; documentation of the differing effects absence from school has on failure rates for students of differing levels of ability, and estimates of the relationship of absence from school in the elementary grades to students' secondary achievement and tendency to drop out of school.

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APPENDIX A

Percentile Equivalents of Number of Days Missed Per Year by Grade for Boys

Days Missed Per Year	Grade													
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
0	4	3	4	6	8	8	9	12	13	13	11	11	7	7
2	13	11	16	21	27	27	28	33	33	33	31	25	21	17
4	22	21	27	35	43	44	44	50	50	48	43	39	33	27
6	32	31	39	49	56	57	57	63	64	60	56	51	44	37
8	41	41	50	60	66	69	70	74	73	70	65	62	54	49
10	49	50	60	68	74	76	78	81	79	77	73	71	61	56
12	56	58	67	75	81	82	83	85	84	83	78	77	67	63
14	63	64	75	81	86	86	87	88	88	86	81	80	73	70
16	68	70	81	86	90	90	90	90	91	90	85	83	77	77
18	73	74	85	89	93	92	93	93	93	92	87	87	81	81
20	77	80	87	92	94	94	94	94	94	94	90	89	84	83
22	81	84	90	93	95	96	95	95	95	96	92	92	87	86
24	84	87	92	95	97	97	96	97	97	96	94	94	89	87
26	87	89	94	96	97	97	97	98	97	97	95	95	91	90
28	89	91	95	97	98	98	98	98	98	97	96	96	93	92
30	91	93	96	97	99	98	98	99	98	98	97	97	93	93
32	92	94	97	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	98	94	95
34	93	95	97	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	99	95	96
36	95	96	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	96	97
38	95	96	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	97	97
40	96	97	98	99	99	99	100	99	99	99	99	99	97	97
42	96	97	98	99	99	99	100	100	99	99	99	99	98	98
44	97	98	99	99	99	99	100	100	99	99	99	99	99	98
46	97	98	99	99	100	100	100	100	100	99	99	99	99	98
48	97	98	99	99	100	100	100	100	100	99	99	100	99	98
50	98	99	99	99	100	100	100	100	100	99	99	100	100	99
>50	103	100	100	99	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

APPENDIX B

Percentile Equivalents of Number of Days Missed Per Year by Grade For Girls

Days Missed Per Year	Grade													
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
0	2	3	3	5	7	7	8	10	11	11	9	6	5	2
2	11	9	12	19	23	23	25	29	28	29	25	21	15	11
4	19	16	23	32	39	37	39	43	42	43	39	33	27	22
6	29	25	35	44	52	50	52	57	54	54	51	46	38	33
8	38	34	46	55	63	60	64	67	64	64	60	56	48	42
10	46	43	56	64	71	69	71	74	72	72	67	65	56	49
12	53	52	63	72	77	76	77	80	78	78	73	72	63	58
14	61	59	70	78	81	81	82	84	83	82	78	77	69	65
16	66	66	75	83	85	85	86	87	86	86	83	82	75	72
18	71	72	81	86	88	88	89	90	89	89	86	85	79	78
20	75	77	85	89	90	91	92	92	90	91	89	88	82	80
22	79	81	87	92	92	93	94	93	93	93	91	90	85	84
24	83	85	90	94	94	94	95	95	95	94	93	91	89	88
26	86	88	92	96	95	95	96	95	95	95	95	92	91	92
28	89	90	93	96	96	96	97	96	96	97	96	94	92	93
30	90	92	94	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	95	93	95
32	92	95	95	98	97	97	98	97	98	98	97	96	95	95
34	93	95	96	98	98	98	98	97	98	98	98	97	96	97
36	94	96	97	98	98	98	99	98	99	98	98	98	96	97
38	95	92	97	99	98	98	99	98	99	98	98	98	97	97
40	96	98	98	99	99	99	99	98	99	99	98	99	97	98
42	97	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	98
44	97	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	99
46	98	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	99
48	98	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
50	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	100	99	99	99
>50	101	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100